



# OFFICE OF THE CLERK/TREASURER

City of Burlington

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## BOARD OF FINANCE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2012

### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Mayor Weinberger; City Council President Shannon; Councilors Bushor and Paul, Councilor Decelles (arrived late); Interim CAO Sisson

**ALSO PRESENT:** ACAO Goodwin; Councilor Siegel; Norm Baldwin, DPW; Tammy Gagne, Airport; Ben Pacy, HR; Carina Driscoll, Mayor's Office; Doreen Kraft, Arts; Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro, CEDO; Karen Vastine, CJC; Chief Michael Schirling, Lise Veronneau, Police, Thomas Melloni, Burak, Anderson & Melloni.

#### 1. Agenda

Mayor Weinberger stated item 12 will be item 2.5, item 7 will be item 2.75, and item 9 will be removed from the agenda.

Councilor Bushor requested that item 11 be addressed as 4.5.

On a motion by Councilors Bushor and Paul, the agenda was adopted unanimously as amended.

#### 2. Public Forum

No one came forward to speak.

#### 2.5 (formerly item 12) Undergrounding Easement with BED

Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro, CEDO, stated this is part of the Waterfront North Project and will underground the utilities in that area. BED would like to connect wires on the east of the railroad track with wires on the west of the railroad tracks. This will grant them permission to use City property to make that connection.

Councilors Bushor and Paul made a motion to approve the easement. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 2.75 (formerly item 7) TEFRA Notice – Airport

Thomas Melloni, Burak Anderson and Melloni, stated the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) of 1987 requires a public hearing before any municipality may issue tax exempt bonds that may have a direct or indirect benefit to a private person. This proposal will refund bonds from 1997 and 2000 to reduce interest payments. City Council will also consider action on long-term bonds to refund Bond Anticipation Notes. This public notice allows public comment before City Council action. No formal action is required on this item.

No member of the public commented.

**3. 127 Bike Path Recovery Project – DPW**

The Board addressed an item to allow for flood repairs to the 127 Bike Path.

Councilor Paul and City Council President Shannon made a motion to approve the project.

Councilor Bushor noted an error in the resolution.

The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Creation of Police Limited Service Civilian Special Projects Coordinator Position – HR**

Councilors Bushor and Paul made a motion to recommend the creation of the positions.

Councilor Bushor noted a change she would like made to the resolution to indicate that it will only be a pilot position for one year. Police Chief Michael Schirling stated they will make that change and the limited service position may last for three years. Ben Pacy, HR, stated it can remain limited service so long as it does not go over the three-year period.

The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Decelles arrived.

**4.5 (formerly item 11) Authorization to Accept Corrections Grant – Police**

The Board addressed an item that would allow the Police Department to accept a grant for \$50,000 to fund a Community Impact Team.

City Council President Shannon and Councilor Bushor made a motion to accept the grant. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. Reclassification of BCA Curator Position – HR**

Councilor Bushor and City Council President Shannon made a motion to approve the reclassification.

Ben Pacy, HR, outlined the materials in the packet and stated this will change the responsibilities of the curator. Doreen Kraft, City Arts, stated this position was created in 1995 before the BCA Center existed. Since that time, there have been many changes to what the position entails. They are managing a larger budget and many sites. There is also a large art sales component to the position. Many volunteer and intern positions report to this person to do a better job with educating and serving the public. There is an extraordinary person in this position at the moment.

Councilor Decelles inquired how the pay was determined and if it would be comparable to similar curator positions. Mr. Pacy stated it is step one out of eighteen in the salary chart. Councilor Decelles inquired if the salary would be comparable to other curator jobs. Ms. Kraft stated they would probably make much more elsewhere, in the \$60,000-\$65,000 range.

The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Bushor stated it is important to know how these positions will be funded and would like this information provided with future requests.

## **6. Purchase of 1 Elizabeth Street – Airport**

Tammy Gagne, Airport, stated with every AIP acquisition, each homeowner and individual property are brought before the Finance Board. The home is now owned by VFHA because the property was foreclosed. The home is currently vacant and is across the street from the grocery store. Acceptance of the grant was approved by the Board of Finance in May.

City Council President Shannon inquired how the value of the home is determined. Ms. Gagne stated it is determined through appraisal. City Council President Shannon inquired how they choose the appraisal company. Ms. Gagne stated one company conducts the appraisals and another that attests to the appraisal. City Council President Shannon stated she knows the housing in that area, and foreclosures often go for less money. Ms. Gagne stated it is a nice looking home of good quality, but the owners could not afford to continue living there. It is located on Airport Drive.

Councilor Paul inquired what the property taxes are and if they will be paid on these empty homes. She also inquired how many more of these requests will come forward. She would like to see this process come to an end. Ms. Gagne stated the request to accept the funding came before the Board of Finance. This will allow for the purchase of up to twenty homes. Each specific request will come before the Board as it is ready. The Mayor has been working with South Burlington to make sure it fits with their plans. There will be purchase and sale agreements for each of them. Mayor Weinberger stated there is an understanding that money will not be used without a plan in place with South Burlington.

Councilor Bushor stated there were fourteen residents included in the pool of money. She inquired how many more of this cluster of properties remain to be purchased. When there was a discussion about the next pool of money, everyone talked about using other methods such as noise mitigation rather than removal of properties. Ms. Gagne stated this particular grant is for property purchases. Councilor Bushor inquired where they are with the fourteen properties. Ms. Gagne stated she is unsure if the fourteen will fully come to fruition. This became an opportunity because a homeowner backed out. She stated she will provide the final number for the fiscal year.

Councilor Paul stated she does not accept this because there has not been an organized plan and they have just been picking off houses. She stated she would like an aerial photograph of each home to understand where they are located. She does not want to be responsible for what has

been done in South Burlington to harm neighborhoods. Ms. Gagne stated the program is voluntary, so it makes it difficult to purchase all of the homes on a block rather than a home here and there. Some homeowners are not ready or willing to sell. They have never told someone they have to sell their home. She showed a map of homes that have been purchased and are slated to be purchased. There has been a plan, though it has not been whole blocks because of the voluntary nature of the program. At the time, South Burlington was on board with the process.

Mayor Weinberger inquired what would happen if this is not passed. Ms. Gagne stated it would delay the closing, though the timing is not critical on this particular property. Councilor Bushor inquired if South Burlington is aware of the purchase. Mayor Weinberger stated that this program is needed and it is important to work with South Burlington. Councilor Bushor stated she does not know what Board of Finance acted on in the past. Mayor Weinberger inquired if a specific list of residences was approved. Ms. Gagne stated there was not, but a list of proposed properties was provided to the Board. The FAA requires this, and the homes must be appraised by their requirements. Sometimes the list does change if a homeowner opts out. All final property purchases are brought to Board of Finance and City Council.

City Council President Shannon stated she appreciates the desire for a plan. She inquired about the location of the home. Ms. Gagne stated it is on a street just off of Airport Drive. City Council President Shannon stated an advantage to this is that the home is vacant already. It will continue to sit there if the Airport does not purchase it. Ms. Gagne stated there are certain properties purchased through this program that are not needed for development. However, Airport Drive is an area that has clearly been identified as a site of future development. There is no question that this property fits in with that development.

Councilor Paul stated she will vote for this but would like to see a more developed plan in the future. Part of the trouble with South Burlington has been with their houses. It will be important to develop a plan that works for everyone.

Councilors Paul and Decelles made a motion to approve the purchase. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **8. Authorization for Extension of Maturity Date for GAN - Airport**

Interim CAO Sisson stated this will provide an extension of six months on a Grant Anticipation Note the Airport had borrowed from Northfield Savings Bank.

Councilors Bushor and Paul made a motion to approve the extension. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **9. Purchase of Bucket Truck – BT**

This item was removed from the agenda.

#### **10. Authorization to Accept Safer Communities Grant - CJC**

Councilor Bushor inquired if there is anything new in this grant. There is a list of things this has been used for in the past, and inquired if there are any major changes. Karen Vastine, CJC, stated the Safer Communities Grant has been coming to the City for over a decade and provides base funding for Community Justice Center. The language remains broad so it can be used for a variety of initiatives. The other grant is new and will fund a program called Circles of Support and Accountability. Councilor Bushor inquired if one is a new grant and the other is a renewal. Ms. Vastine stated that is correct.

Councilor Paul and City Council President Shannon made a motion to authorize acceptance of the grants. The motion passed unanimously.

Without objection, Mayor Weinberger adjourned the Board of Finance meeting at 6:23 pm.